IMT Nuremberg Archives

H – 962

International Court of Justice

Com A
Take 4 , page 7
Cook
1530 - 1700
18 June 1946

Page 3 - See interpreter
" 9 - " "
" 32 - " "
" 36 - See Dr. Kempner re a literal translation
" 45 - checks spelling & pp. 51

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF TESTIMONY FOR THE DEFENSE OR ORGANIZATIONS TAKEN BEFORE A COMMISSION APPOINTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL, PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 4 OF THE ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL, DATED 13 MARCH, 1946.

TUESDAY, 18 JUNE 1946

H0962 - 0002

COMMISSIONERS:

Colonel A. M. S. Neave,
Captain Joseph Tubridy.

THE OKW.

(The Commission convened at 1600 hours)

KURTH VON RUNSTEDT, a witness, took the stand and testified as follows:

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Raise your right hand and repeat this oath after me: I swear by God, the Almighty, and Omniscient, that I will speak the pure truth and will withhold and add nothing.

(The witness repeated the oath)

You may be seated.

DR. LATERNSER: I intend to prove by this witness, Field Marshal Von Runstedt, the following details:

First: That the military leaders did not form a group;

Secondly, they did not participate in the conspiracy, and,

Thirdly, they did not have any influence on the decisions of the political leaders, and

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Fourthly, the military leaders are not responsible under Article VI of the statute, that is, they did not commit any crimes according to Article VI of the Statute and also did not develop any criminal methods or ~~xx~~ activities.

MR. President, I wish to sit down during the interrogation.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: You may do so.

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY DR. LATERNSER:

Q What was your ~~last xxxx~~ position in the German Army?

A General Field ~~Marshall~~ Marshal and Commander in Chief West ~~from~~ until March 1945.

Q Are you now an English prisoner of war?

A Yes, I am now an English prisoner of war.

Q I just have a few questions concerning the circle of the highest military leaders. The Prosecution claims that the highest military leaders formed into a group to aid the conspiracy and whose intent it was to bring about aggressive war. I would like to ask you whether you as military leaders actually did join yourselves together to further such a goal?

A No, there was never such a unified group and it never would have been possible.

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Q Do you know if in any other army in the world any such groups were formed as it is claimed here?

A I don't have any information concerning them and I do not think of any nation with the exception of Japan where a military clique was ~~xxxxxxxx~~ an important power. However, I do not know of any Western powers that may have had such groups and I cannot think of any such organization like that in Russia. They were ordered and they obeyed.

Q In the Reichstag under the leadership of Von ~~Xxxx~~ Seecht, Hammerstein and Von Fritsch ???? was there such an organization or group, and if there was one was it approved by the highest leaders?

A There were only two Commanders in Chief in the whole Reichswehr. There was one in Berlin for the German East and one at Kassel for the German West.

BY CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

Q What year is this?

A That was from 1920 until - I don't know exactly what year, but it was past Hitler's time, that is September, 1933. I had that Command in Chief in Berlin myself for six years. A ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ combining of the two commanders in chief, of which I was one, would have been possible under the old Prussian Military Division to which we all belonged. Colonel General ~~Xxxx~~ Seecht

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one can almost say built up the Reichswehr as the old German Army was built up. Soldier officers had nothing to do with politics at all and did not mix in politics. An officer was told what to do and he obeyed, otherwise the army could not exist and the country could not exist.

Q Did you ever attend a meeting or conference in which any kind of conspiracy was planned?

A No, I never attended such a conference and I am positive that no such conference ever took place. If two commanding generals, a commander in chief and the commanding generals of seven divisions and three cavalry divisions were called together that is all together twelve commanding generals. When those were called together by the Commander in Chief of the entire army it was only to discuss training questions but not to discuss any political ideas.

Q Did you have any close connection with the members of the other accused organizations?

A I never had any connection with any of these organizations with the exception of 1944 when I was given nine gauleiters under my command to whom I had to give orders for the construction of anti-tank ditches and trenches in the Western part of Germany, so that these fortifications would be built up and would be constructed with military value and not just good for nothing. Besides that we higher officers, that is, from about 1934 in the

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beginning, were being watched continuously, our telephones were tapped and we were in general watched very closely.

Q How well do you know or how many do you know of the officers of this military group that is being accused now?

A As far as the old members are concerned I know every one of them, some closer, some not too well. As far as the ~~old members are concerned~~ young men are concerned who just became ~~Commanders~~ Commanders in Chief recently, at that time they were captains and majors and I didn't get to meet them until later.

Q Did the political leaders and the military leaders after 1920 at any time, have a unified plan concerning the political leadership or political tendencies ?

A No, as I ~~have~~ have stated before we were soldiers and only soldiers. We were not interested in the foreign politics which were not too important at the time and the interior politics which touched us immediately we were not concerned with them in a military sense, that is, after the change of 1918 and General Von Seecht ~~Seke?~~ never would have allowed that.

Q In other words, the activities of the higher military leaders was their work as military leaders?

A We attempted in the Reichswehr, which was made up entirely of volunteers, to train these men in

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the Reichswehr to be good soldiers and to train them in case of an interior xix uprising or anything that they could be used as such, and also if any foreign nation should attempt to mix into German politics, that we could defend our German home land. We also were very much interested and very active in training our future officers, the training of which took almost all of our time.

Q Upon whose suggestions were military plans drawn up?

A The chief of the higher armed forces, that is, the very highest military leaders had under him a staff of young officers whose duty it was to draw any such campaign plans upon the order of the political leaders, such as, for instance, the Reich President. After these plans had been drawn up by the superiof officers and declared all right by the Chief of the entire armed forces, then the individual Commanders in Chief were informed of these plans as far as their own small limited sectors were concerned.

There was no protest, or better, no question concerning these orders. One did his duty and carried out these orders on paper. Therefore, while I was Commander in Chief in Berlin I had plans that in case of an attack by the Czech or Polish forces or even by Lithuanian forces I was supposed to do everything xxxxxx possible to

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defend the home land, and that at that time was very little.

Q The answers to my questions up to now concerns mostly the period before the war?

A Yes

Q I have some more questions concerning this time before the war. What was the point of view of the important military leaders as far as the party and their goal was concerned?

A We, the old leaders, either were entirely indifferent toward the party, or, if anything, were against any other party, or we were against it and against the rash tactics and the demonstrations of the National Socialist Party. I cannot think of a single leader before the year 1932, that is, not a single divisional or higher general that was a National Socialist, and the first one of these generals to become a National Socialist was General Field Marshal Von Blomberg, who only became a National Socialist under pressure. I wish to say some-thing else. The National Socialist Putsch of 1923 caused us a lot of anger and the main reason was that the National Socialists attempted to involve the Infantry School in Munich which trained our future officers to participate side by side with them in this putsch, and actually the Bavarian Division under a leader, whose name I do not want to mention, had wanted at that time to fight against

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Von Seecht's troups. The national idea as was given of the national socialists at that time was the benefit of the various other organizations and parties, such, as, for instance, the German Nationalist or the German Volks Party, and the Stahlag. All of these organizations were just as much interested in national unity as the national socialists which later on stated they were the only ones that had this idea.

Q What was the attitude of the higher military leaders after 1933, that is, in connection with the party. I am concerned especially with those military leaders that are now in the circle of military leaders accused as a criminal organization?

A The National Socialist ideas which were good were usually ideas that were carried over from the old Prussian times and we had known already without the National Socialists. However, there were a few modern ideas also introduced which were for the aid of the people. However, other ideas such as the racial question and the Jewish question and all of the other totalitarian ideas were not approved by the military leaders of that time or the military leaders that are on trial today, and all of the military leaders that are on trial today, with the exception of one, whose name I do not want to

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mention because he was killed during the war, all of those were against and fought these totalitarian and new ideas of the National Socialist Party.

Q Under the military leaders there was without a doubt an attempt to get away from the Versailles treaty, what attitude did you have toward that treaty?

A That I have mentioned, every German had that wish. I admit that we wanted to cast aside this Versailles treaty. Everybody, even the foreign ministry, and I want to mention for instance, Strelitz ? Stresemann (G) they always attempted in Geneva to bring about equality for the German people, and whether or not the armament of the other nations was low or was raised did not matter. The only thing that did matter was that Germany should not stand among the nations of Europe any more as a criminal nation without any right or equality among the group of nations. But understand, we attempted and wanted this not by the way of military strife, but through peaceful conventions and discussions and we were assured of aid, especially by the British, in that respect.

Q Did the return of Alsace Lorraine have anything to do with the thinking of the military leaders?

A No, from my own experience I can say that this did not have anything to do with the thinking of the German Military Leaders. I was myself stationed

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in Alsace Lorraine during the last war, and as anybody that has ever been in Alsace Lorraine will know, any nation, or either one of the nations, that receives Alsace Lorraine will not be satisfied with this country. For instance, during the time that Kaiser Napolean II attempted to bring Alsace Lorraine into closer cooperation to France, then there was a passive German resistance, that is in all of the Churches there were German inscriptions and the people wanted to speak German. However, in 1917 when Alsace Lorraine was handed over to Germany we had exactly the opposite, there was a passive resistance of the French and all the inscriptions in the graveyards became French and all the people wanted or attempted to speak French.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: What is the point of ~~all of~~ this, Dr. Laternser?

DR. LATERNSER: The military leaders are accused of having planned and planned aggressively for the returning of various parts of Europe to Germany, and among them Alsace Lorraine was supposed to have been one of the parts that Germany wanted back. I just want to show the typical attitude of the German Military Leaders as far as these points were concerned.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: We don't need ~~that~~ it in detail, do we? that

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BY DR. LATERNSER:

Q What was the attitude of the military leaders until 1939 concerning an aggressive war, a war that would be prepared by Germany?

A No normal German wished to have another war, or anybody that went through the last world war did not wish to have another war to come about. We military leaders also knew that even though the German army had re-armed it was by far too weak to fight against the strong nations. However, if it was to oppose an enemy attack then we were ready to fight or ready to oppose it with all of our little means or with all of the few means that we had.

Q The Prosecution states that the army helped the National Socialist Party to come into power and also helped to stabilize this totalitarian pontrol over all Germany by the Nazi Party. I wish you would give your opinion concerning this statement.

A Adolph Hitler was the leader of the strongest party within Germany, the person that had received the most votes. He thereupon was elevated to the post of Chancellor by our old Chief, General Von Hindenburg. In other words, it was purely a democratic principle that brought Hitler to power. It would have been mutiny

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on the part of us old solderies if we had acted against the orders of the Field Marshal and the wish of the German people in opposing this National Socialist Party. In other words, it would have been breaking into treason and a military impossibility. In addition to that our new Reichswehr could be prevented from fighting against the National Socialist Party very easily by the transportation strike or the strike of transportation workers or railroad workers, for instance. Is that enough?

Q Yes. In what position were you in ~~1935~~ 1935 when the Wehrmacht (Hoheit) was declared?

A I was still Commander in Chief of the Army Group in ~~Berlin~~ Berlin.

Q When did you hear about it and by what means did you hear about this new order?

A I heard that through a speech of Hitler over the radio in which Hitler declared in a speech to the German people that he intended to build up the German army to so many divisions.

Q In other words, even though you were Commander in Chief in Berlin, you were not asked and your information was not requested before this order was given?

A No, at that time the Ministry of ~~War~~ War was supreme commander, and not as it had been before, the Commander in Chief of all the armed forces was in charge

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of the army and we received only that information which was absolutely necessary for us to carry on our work.

Q Did the training of officers and men have any aggressive idea behind it, or did it follow any aggressive idea and would you also explain to us the reason and the facts concerning the so called training-travels of officers, general staff officers and what the duties were at that time?

A The training of the German army was at all times built on a defensive character, to build up an army that was able to defend the Reichs/borders against the nations that were surrounding us, that had an aggressive intention. Of course, in planning this defensive steps, these defensive measures a certain amount of aggressive training had to be incoprorated in order that if there was a time when an attack was made we could answer back in an aggressive manner. For instance, if I were attacked on the street today I would not just stand there and wave my hands, but I would hit the person over the head with my walking stick. That was about the basis on which the German army was trained. In other words, it was necessary to train the small units or small groups within the army to such offensive attacks or offensive tactics.

Q Field Marshal, could you give us some information or examples concerning these things?

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A Yes, I am just coming to that now. To train leaders and aides for these general staff officers, which was prohibited in the Versailles treaty, before then certain training travels were ~~xxxxxx~~ organized. However, these training travels always had as its basis an attack upon Germany, and they always were within Germany, that is, within the German borders, for instance if the French marched into southern Germany and they told us to unite with the Czechs, so that Germany is not divided, or if the Poles attacked upper Silesia to ~~xx~~ take away our industrial area, or if the Poles and Czechs united and attacked the small strip of Silesia to cut off the small strip of Silesia, or the French advanced into the ~~xxxxx~~ Ruhr valley and took that, and if the Lithuanians take Eastern Prussia from two sides, and there attempt to capture the entire province of Silesia, in case one considers these many possibilities of attack by the French, by the Poles and by the Czechs, if one considers them, then it is evident that Germany had to defend herself or had to have an army in order to live, unless they received some other aid from some other nation, and that nation in that case would have been England.

Q I have only one further question concerning this theme. Was an attack against any of the neighboring nations ever the basis or subject of such a training

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travel or war travel?

A Before it was planned that we had to get back the Sudetenland, never. I think that was in 1933.

(The Commission adjourned at 1700 hours)

The foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the testimony of KURTH VON RUNDSTEDT taken on 18 June 1946

Reporter

CERTIFIED TO:

Commissioner

Commissioner.

H0962 -0017

Official transcript of testimony for the Defense or organizations taken before a Commission appointed by the International Military Tribunal, pursuant to paragraph 4, of the Order of the Tribunal, dated 13 March, 1946.

Tuesday, 18 June 1946

COMMISSIONERS:

Colonel A. M. S. Neave
Captain Joseph Tubridy

THE OKW

(The Commission convened at 1600 hours)

KURT VON RUNDSTEDT, a witness, took the stand, and testified as follows:

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: Raise your right hand and repeat this oath after me: I swear by God, the Almighty, and Omniscient, that I will speak the pure truth and will withhold and add nothing.

(The witness repeated the oath)

You may be seated.

DR. LATERNSER: I intend to prove by this witness, Field Marshal von Rundstedt, the following details:

First: That the military leaders did not form a group;

Secondly, they did not participate in the conspiracy, and,

Thirdly, they did not have any influence on the decisions of the political leaders, and

Fourthly, the military leaders are not responsible under Article VI of the statute, that is, they did not commit any crimes according to Article VI of the Statute and also did not develop any criminal methods or activities.

Mr. President, I wish to sit down during the interrogation.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: You may do so.

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY DR. LATERNSER:

Q What was your last position in the German Army?

A General Field Marshal and Commander in Chief West until March 1945.

Q Are you now an English prisoner of war?

A Yes, I am now an English prisoner of war.

Q I have just a few questions concerning the circle of the highest military leaders. The Prosecution claims that the highest military leaders formed into a group to aid the conspiracy and whose intent it was to bring about aggressive war. I would like to ask you whether you as military leaders actually did join yourselves together to further such a goal?

A No, there was never such a unified group and it never would have been possible.

Q Do you know if in any other army in the world any such groups were formed as it is claimed here?

A I don't have any information concerning them and I do not think of any nation with the exception of Japan where a military clique was an important power. However, I do not know of any Western powers that may have had such groups and I cannot think of any such organization like that in Russia. They were ordered and they obeyed.

Q In the Reichstag under the leadership of Von Seecht, Hammerstein, and Von Fritsch was there such an organization or group, and if there was one was it approved by the highest leaders?

A There were only two Commanders in Chief in the whole Reichswehr. There was one in Berlin for the German East and one at Kassel for the German West.

BY CAPTAIN TUBRIDY:

Q What year is this?

A That was from 1920 until -- I don't know exactly what year, but it was past Hitler's time, and that is September, 1933. I had that Commander in Chief in Berlin myself for six years. A combining of the two commanders in chief, of which I was one, would have been possible under the old Prussian Military Division to which we all belonged. Colonel General Seecht

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one can almost say built up the Reichswehr as the old German Army was built up. Soldier officers had nothing to do with politics at all and did not mix in politics. An officer was told what to do and he obeyed, otherwise the army could not exist and the country could not exist.

Q Did you ever attend a meeting or conference in which any kind of conspiracy was planned?

A No, I never attended such a conference and I am positivr that no such conference ever took place. If two commanding generals, a commander in chief and the commanding generals, of seven divisions and three cavalry divisions were called together that is all together twelve commanding generals. When those were called together by the Commander in Chief of the entire army it was only to discuss training questions but not to discuss any political ideas.

Q Did you have any close connection with the members of the other accused organizations?

A I never had any connection with any of these organizations with the exception of 1944 when I was given nine gauleiters under my command to whom I had to give orders for the construction of anti-tank ditches and trenches in the Western part of Germany, so that these fortifications would be built up and would be constructed with military value and not just good for nothing. Besides that we higher officers, that is, from about 1934 in the beginning, were being watched continuously, our telephones were tapped and we were in general watched very closely.

Q How well do you knowor how many do you know of the officers of this military group that is being accused now?

A As far as the old members are concerned I know every one of them, some closer, some not too well. As far as the young men are concerned who just became Commanders in Chief recently, at that time they were captains and majors and I didn't get to meet them until later.

Q Did the political leaders and the military leaders after 1920 at any time, have a unified plan concerning the political leadership or political tendencies?

A No, as I have stated before we were soldiers and only soldiers. We were not interested in the foreign politics which were not too important at

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the time and the interior politics which touched us immediately we were not concerned with them in a military sense, that is, after the change of 1918 and General Von Seecht never would have allowed that.

Q In other words, the activities of the higher military leaders was their work as military leaders?

A We attempted in the Reichswehr, which was made up entirely of volunteers, to train these men in the Reichswehr to be good soldiers and to train them in case of an interior uprising or anything that they could be used as such, and also if any foreign nation should attempt to mix into German politics, that we could defend our German home land. We also were very much interested and very active in training our future officers, the training of which took almost all of our time.

Q Upon whose suggestions were military plans drawn up?

A The chief of the higher armed forces, that is, the very highest military leaders had under him a staff of young officers whose duty it was to draw any such campaign plans upon the order of the political leaders, such as, for instance, the Reich President. After these plans had been drawn up by the superior officers and declared all right by the Chief of the entire armed forces, then the individual Commanders in Chief were informed of these plans as far as their own small limited sectors were concerned.

There was no protest, or better, no question concerning these orders. One did his duty and carried out these orders on paper. Therefore, while I was Commander in Chief in BerlinI had plans that in case of an attack by the Czech or Polish forces or even by Lithuanian forces I was supposed to do everything possible t o

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defend the home land, and that at that time was very little.

Q The answers to my questions up to now concerns mostly the period before the war ?

A Yes.

Q I have some more questions concerning this time before the war. What was the point of view of the important military leaders as far as the party and their goal was concerned ?

A We, the old leaders, either were entirely indifferent toward the party, or, if anything, were against any other party, or we were against it and against the rash tactics and the demonstrations of the National Socialist Party. I cannot think of a single leader before the year 1932, that is, not a single divisional or higher general that was a National Socialist, and the first one of these generals to become a National Socialist was General Field Marshal Von Blonberg, who only became a National Socialist under pressure. I wish to say something else. The National Socialist Putsch of 1932 caused us a lot of anger and the main reason was that the National Socialists attempted to involve the Infantry School in Munich which trained our future officers to participate side by side with them in this putsch, and actually the Bavarian Division under a leader, whose name I do not want to mention, had wanted at that time to fight against Von Seecht's troups. The national idea as was given of the national socialists at that time was the benefit of the various other organizations and parties, such, as, for instance, the German Nationalist or the German Volks Party, and the Stahlag. All of these organizations were just as much interested in national unity as the national socialists which later on stated they were the only ones that had this idea.

Q What was the attitude of the higher military leaders after 1933, that is, in connection with the party. I am concerned especially with those military leaders that are now in the circle of military leaders accused as a criminal organization ?

A The National Socialist ideas which were good were usually ideas that were carried over from the old Prussian times and we had known already without the National Socialists. However, there were a few modern ideas also introduced which were for the aid of the people. However, other ideas such as the racial question and the Jewish question and all of the other totalitarian ideas were

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were not approved by the military leaders of that time or the military leaders that are on trial today, and all of the military leaders that are on trial today, with the exception of one, whose name I do not want to mention because he was killed during the war, all of those were against and fought these totalitarian and new ideas of the National Socialist Party.

Q Under the military leaders there was without a doubt an attempt to get away from the Versailles treaty, what attitude did you have toward that treaty ?

A That I have mentioned, every German had that wish. I admit that we wanted to cast aside this Versailles treaty. Everybody, even the foreign ministry, and I want to mention for instance, Stresemann ? They always attempted in Geneva to bring about equality for the German people, and whether or not the armament of the other nations was low or was raised did not matter. The only thing that did matter was that Germany should not stand among the nations of Europe any more as a criminal nation without any right or equality among the group of nations. But understand, we attempted and wanted this not by the way of military strife, but through peaceful conventions and discussions and we were assured of aid, especially by the British, in that respect.

Q Did the return of Alsace Lorraine have anything to do with the thinking of the military leaders ?

A No, from my own experience I can say that this did not have anything to do with the thinking of the German Military Leaders. I was myself stationed

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in Alsace Lorraine during the last war, and as anybody that has ever been in Alsace Lorraine will know, any nation, or either one of the nations, that receives Alsace Lorraine will not be satisfied with this country. For instance, during the time that Kaiser Napoleon II attempted to bring Alsace Lorraine into closer cooperation to France, then there was a passive German resistance, that is in all of the Churches there were German inscriptions and the people wanted to speak German. However, in 1917 when Alsace Lorraine was handed over to Germany we had exactly the opposite, there was a passive resistance of the French and all the inscriptions in the graveyards became French and all the people wanted or attempted to speak French.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: What is the point of this, Dr. Laternser?

DR. LATERNSER: The military leaders are accused of having planned and planned aggressively for the returning of various parts of Europe to Germany, and among them Alsace Lorraine was supposed to have been one of the parts that Germany wanted back. I just want to show the typical attitude of the German Military Leaders as far as these points were concerned.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: We don't need it in that detail, do we?

BY DR. LATERNSER:

Q What was the attitude of the military leaders until 1939 concerning an aggressive war, a war that would be prepared by Germany?

A No normal German wished to have another war, or anybody that went through the last world war did not wish to have another war to come about. We military leaders also knew that even though the German army had re-armed it was by far too weak to fight against the strong nations. However, if it was to oppose an enemy attack then we were ready to fight or ready to oppose it with all of our little means or with all of the few means that we had.

Q The Prosecution states that the army helped the National Socialist Party to come into power and also helped to stabilize this

H0962-0024

totalitarian control over all Germany by the Nazi Party. I wish you would give your opinion concerning this statement.

A Adolph Hitler was the leader of the strongest party within Germany, the person that had received the most votes. He thereupon was elevated to the post of Chancellor by our old Chief, General Von Hindenburg. In other words, it was purely a democratic principle that brought Hitler to power. It would have been mutiny on the part of us old soldiers if we had acted against the orders of the Field Marshal and the wish of the German people in opposing this National Socialist Party. In other words, it would have been breaking into treason and a military impossibility. In addition to that our new Reichswehr could be prevented from fighting against the National Socialist Party very easily by the transportation strike or the strike of transportation workers or railroad workers, for instance. Is that enough?

Q Yes. In what position were you in 1935 when the Wehrhoheit was declared?

A I was still Commander in Chief of the Army Group in Berlin.

Q When did you hear about it and by what means did you hear about this new order?

A I heard that through a speech of Hitler over the radio in which Hitler declared in a speech to the German people that he intended to build up the German army to so many divisions.

Q In other words, even though you were Commander in Chief in Berlin, you were not asked and your information was not requested before this order was given?

A No, at that time the Ministry of War was supreme commander and not as it had been before, the Commander in Chief of all the armed forces was in charge

H0962-0025

of the army, and we received only that information which was absolutely necessary for us to carry on our work.

Q. Did the training of officers and men have any aggresive idea behind it, or did it follow any aggressive idea, and would you also explain to us the reason and the facts concerning the so-called traini g-travels of officers, general staff officers and what the duties were at that time?

A. The training of the German army was at all times built on a defensive character, to build up an army that was able to defend the Reich borders against the nations that were surrounding us, that had an aggressive intention. Of course, in planning this defensive step, these defensive measures, a certain amount of aggressive training had to be incorporated in order that, if there was a time when an attack was made, we could answer back in an aggressive manner. For instance, if I were attacked on the street today, I would not just stand there and wave my hands, but I would hit the person over the head with my walking stick. That was about the basis on which the German army was trained. In other words, it was necessary to train the small units or small groups within the army to such offensive attacks or offensive tactics.

Q. Field Marshal, could you give us some information or examples concerning these things?

A. Yes, I am just coming to that now. To train leaders and aides for these general staff officers, which was prohibited in the Versailles treaty, before then certain training travels were organized. However, these training travels always had as its basis an attack upon Germany, and they always were within Germany, that is, within the German borders, for instance if the French marched into southern Germany and they told us to unite with the Czechs, so that Germany is not divided, or if the Poles attacked Upper Silesia to take away our industrial area, or if the Poles and Czechs united and attacked the small strip of Silesia to cut off the small strip of Silesia, or the French advanced into the

Ruhr valley and took that, and if the Lithuanians take Eastern Prussia from two sides, and there attempt to capture the entire province of Silesia, in case one considers these many possibilities of attack by the French, by the Poles and by the Czechs, if one considers them, then it is evident that Germany had to defend herself or had to have an army in order to live, unless they received some other aid from some other nation, and that nation in that case would have been England.

Q. I have only one further question concerning this theme. Was an attack against any of the neighboring nations ever the basis or subject of such a training travel or war travel?

A. Before it was planned that we had to get back to the Sudentenland, never. I think that was in 1933.

(The Commission adjourned at 1700 hours)

The foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the testimony of KURTH VON RUNSTEDT taken on 18 June 1946

ROSE V. COOK
Reporter

CERTIFIED TO:

JOSEPH F. TUBRIDY
Commissioner.

H0962 - 0026